

# All About Asian Elephants

**Diet:** they spend up to 19 hours a day feeding mostly on grasses. However, they also eat large amounts of tree bark, roots, leaves, and small stems. They enjoy cultivated crops such as bananas, rice, and sugarcane and always stay close to a source of water because they need to drink water at least once a day. They can consume around 300 pounds of food a day!

**Characteristics:** they are thick-skinned herbivores with fan-shaped ears and large trunks. Both males and females can have tusks, though not all of them develop them. Tusks tend to be smaller in Asian elephants compared to their African relatives.



**Scientific name:** *Elephas maximus*

**Body length:** 18-21 feet

**Height:** 6 to 12 feet tall at the shoulder

**Weight:** 4,400 – 12,000 pounds

**Gestation period:** 18-22 months

**Life span:** 60 to 70 years

## Interesting Facts:

- The Asian elephant is the largest land mammal on the Asian continent.
- They are extremely sociable, forming groups of six to seven related females that are led by the oldest female, the matriarch.
- Elephants can use low-frequency sound waves for communication between members of the herd and individuals outside the herd and can carry these sounds for distances of up to 10 miles.
- Their trunks contain around 100,000 muscles and can be used for tasks as delicate as picking up small objects or as powerful as uprooting trees.